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THE OLIVE BRANCH;

OR,

A PLEA FOR ISRAEL.



JOHNSTONE AND HUNTER,
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EDINBURGH :
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104 HIGH STREET.

THE OLIVE BRANCH;

OR,

A PLEA FOR ISRAEL.

WILD Olive Branches, happy ye !
Ingrafted on the heavenly tree,
Whose life-bestowing leaves are spread,
To heal the sick, and raise the dead.
Though wild by nature, ye are found,
Upspringing from the hallowed ground
Of faith, repentance, joy, and peace,
Where hope's sweet blossoms still increase ;
But though ye bloom and flourish there,
Remember whence ye sprang, and fear,

Lest, like the natural boughs, ye be
Dissever'd from the parent tree.
Ye who compose the Christian band,
By sovereign grace alone ye stand,
Despise not then the outcast Jew,
While sin still lives and reigns in you ;
But while ye linger here below,
Partakers of earth's weal and wo,
Let faith, and hope, and love abide,
And journey with you side by side—
Ponder the careworn path of tears,
The beaten track of bygone years,
Mark'd by the weary-footed race
Who sought in vain a resting-place.
Behold them ! wanderers from their birth,
And strangers over all the earth,
Poor exiles from their fatherland,
With few to offer friendship's hand,
Oppress'd and scorn'd by cruel foes,
The victims of unnumber'd woes,

Follow'd by persecutions dire,
Captivity, the sword, and fire.

If God thus judged the natural bough,
Take heed, ye Gentile branches, now,
Lest while, with leaves of promise found,
Ye still be cumberers of the ground.
Think not, though memory may bring
A catalogue of Israel's sin,
So long and broad, that erring man
Its length and breadth can never scan ;
Though solemn thought, with rapid flight,
May rest on "mournful Calvary's" height,
Where Jesus stood, 'mongst wicked men,
Wearing his thorny diadem,
While Jewish voices raised the cry
Of "Crucify him, crucify!"
Think not that Jews alone were there,—
A Roman soldier raised the spear

That pierced the Saviour's sacred side ;
And Gentiles mock'd the Crucified,
And in derision bent the knee
To Him who hung upon the tree.
Yes, Jew and Gentile joined to do
The darkest deed the world e'er knew ;
Yet, from the Cross a prayer arose,
The prayer of Jesus for his foes—
“ Father, forgive them ! ” and shall we
Refuse to join the heavenly plea ?
Had they but known, in that their day,
The path of peace, the truth, the way,
They might have shunn'd that awful deed
Which call'd down wrath on Israel's seed.

When sordid acts we see or hear,
Let us not judge, but still forbear—
Let Charity, with footsteps light,
Draw near and veil from mortal sight

Those sins which man can but deplore—
Angels above can do no more ;
The voice of Him who rules in heaven,
Alone can say, “Thou art forgiven.”

Remember, by their fall we rise
To bless the Lamb whom they despise ;
A veil is on their eyes, that we
Our Prophet, Priest, and King may see.
This Gospel-day to Gentiles given,
To light them to the gate of heaven,
Must be fulfill'd, and then free grace
Will flow in streams to Israel's race.

Think what we owe the ancient Jews,—
They first proclaimed the joyful news,
That Bethlehem's Star, which shone so bright,
Had risen to give the Gentiles light.
We had been Heathens still had they
Refused to teach, to toil, and pray ;

From them we first received the Word,
The Records of our blessed Lord—
Of Him, the Righteous One, the True,
Our great Emmanuel, born a Jew,—
That Word, whose sacred pages prove
The vastness of the Father's love,
And promise God, the Spirit's grace,
To aid us in the heavenward race.
Yes! much we owe those ancient Jews,
And can we, dare we, now refuse
To help their fallen sons, and try
To bring the outcast wanderers nigh?
No! ours it is to smooth their path,
And lead them back to Him who saith,
“Blessed is he who blesseth thee,”
And binds the broken Olive Tree.

That Branch, so sear'd and broken down,
Shall yet bear fruit of bright renown,

When love divine, with sunny light,
Shall burst on darken'd Israel's sight,
To cheer the dismal night of grief,
And pierce the cloud of unbelief.
Let Faith outspread her eagle-wing,
And, soaring high, begin to sing,
“ Cast up, cast up, prepare the way ! ”
A brightening star proclaims the day,
The dawning of a golden morn
Of blessing to the poor forlorn ;
Roll back, ye waves, the Voice of God
Bids Jacob's sons pass o'er dry-shod ;
Make way, and guard the chosen band,
Who seek once more their native land,
Their own, their much-loved Palestine,
Where each shall sit beneath his vine.

Jerusalem, break forth and sing !
Behold thy long-expected King !

He comes to wave the flag of peace,
And bid thy days of mourning cease !
Arise and shine, thy Light is come,
And glory gilds the pathway home !
Thy sons and daughters from afar
Shall hail the rising of their Star ;
The harp, which on the willows hung
So long unheeded, long unstrung,
Shall wake again on Judah's plains,
And breathe its softest, sweetest strains.
And then shall men and angels see
A holy, heavenly Olive Tree,
Growing in harmony complete,
And bending at Emmanuel's feet ;
Each wild and natural branch shall twine
Around the Stem, the Root divine,
And drawing thence its strength and grace,
Shall spread abroad and grow apace,
Till, full of fruits of righteousness,
The nations round shall come to bless

This Tree, which, planted by the Lord,
Shall in due time fulfil his Word.

When former things shall pass away,
And night is lost in endless day,
Then Jew and Gentile shall be one
Before their great Redeemer's throne ;
And with united voice proclaim,
“ Worthy art thou, O Lord, to reign ! ”

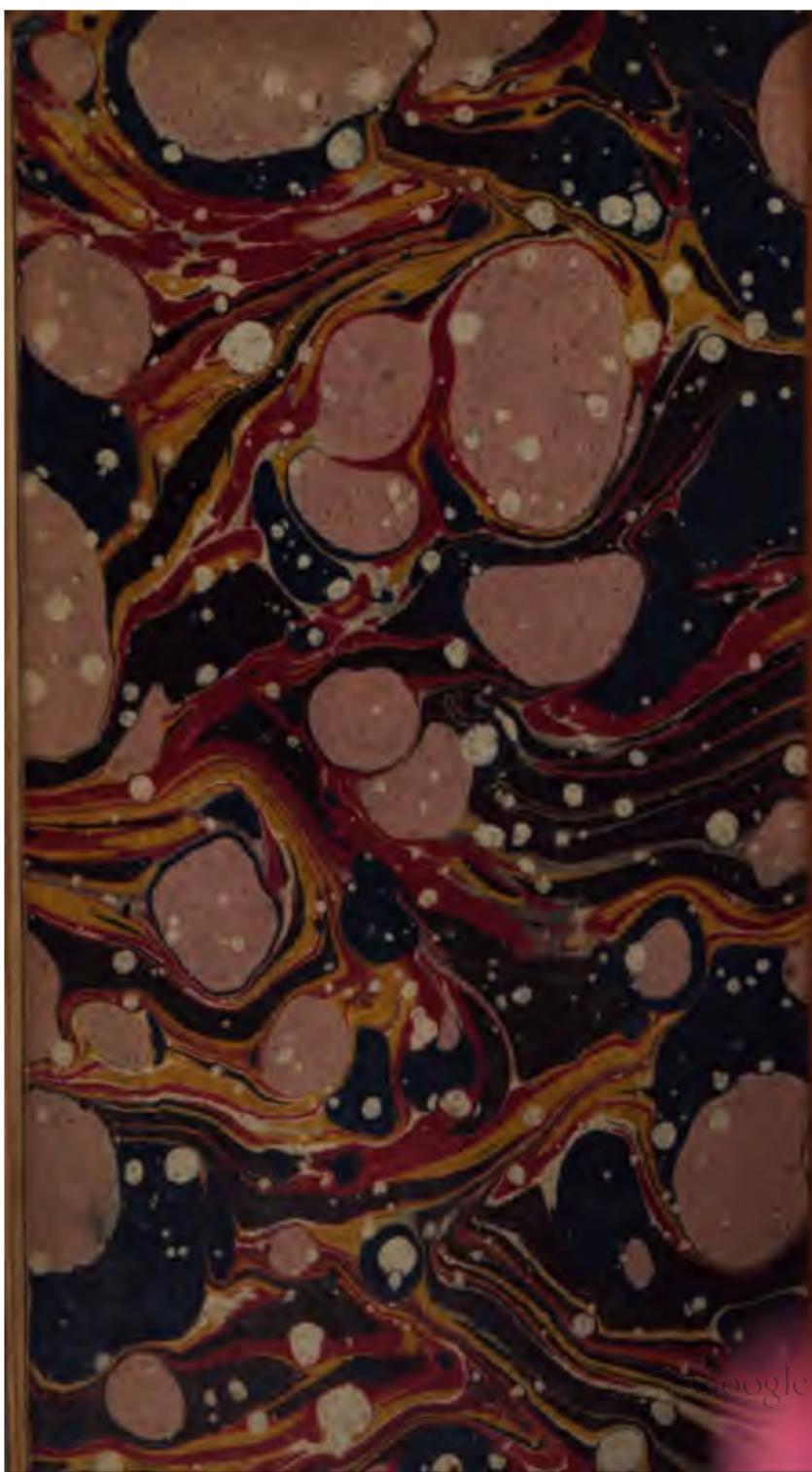
If this shall be the glorious end
To which the lapse of time must tend ;
If this is what was once foretold,
When holy Prophets sung of old,
And all the Jews must be restored
Before the coming of the Lord,—
Then let us hope that God will smile,
And bless this highly favour'd isle, ;
By causing many hearts to feel
For Israel's wo, and Israel's weal.

Let Britain's sons—the brave, the free,
The friends of peace and liberty—
Be first to pause, and see that God
Is laying down his chast'ning rod,
And meeting with returning grace
His ancient, loved, and chosen race.
Then let them aid the work divine,
And bless the heirs of Palestine,—
Their labour shall not be in vain
To bring the weary back again ;
And their's shall be the rich reward,
The promised blessing of the Lord.

THE END.

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